

JESUS' IMPACT UPON CROWDS AND EVIL SPIRITS: SEEKING AND FEARING CHRIST MARK 03:07–12

Introduction: Crowds Follow Jesus Christ

Jesus' impact upon people was unbelievable; it was incomprehensible. In just a few months, the whole nation was aroused to seek after the One called Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah. A fact that is often unnoticed is the fact covered in this passage: "A large crowd...followed [Him]." The multitude is called "large" and "many" twice (vv. 7, 8). The crowds were enormous (remember the feeding of five thousand men, not counting the women and children). The multitudes did what we so desperately need to do: they truly sought Him, even to the point of *crowding Him* (v. 9) and *were pushing forward to touch Him and crushing in upon Him* (v. 10).

Jesus' impact upon evil spirits was just as dramatic. They were stricken to bow before Him and to acknowledge His Messiahship — two acts that desperately need to be done by men.

- I. Jesus withdrew (v.7).
- II. His impact upon people (vv.7-10).
- III. His impact upon evil spirits (vv. 11-12).

I. *Mark 03:07 Response to Jesus Christ*

Jesus was forced to withdraw to the Sea of Galilee. There seemed to be two reasons for this move.

1. The leaders, both religious and political, were now plotting His death (see note, Mt. 12:14-16). He still had much to teach before He could face the end. As He had said on several occasions, His hour had not yet come. He must not allow His death — not yet. Thus, He had to move out of the synagogue into the open country.
2. The crowds had become too large for the synagogues and the cities to handle. People by the multitudes were flocking to Him, even to the point of endangering His life by the crush of bodies (see vv. 8-9).

Note this: Mark says Jesus also withdrew in Mk. 6:31, 46: 7:24, 31; 10:1; 14:34-35.

II. *Mark 03:07–10 Impact of Jesus Christ*

The impact of Jesus upon the crowds was phenomenal. This fact is often overlooked or minimized. The crowds demonstrate how eagerly men should seek after Jesus. Note two eye-opening facts.

First, teeming crowds flocked to Jesus and truly sought Him.

1. They came from all over the nation, and some even came from foreign nations.
 - a. Crowds came from all over Galilee. Imagine a district so heavily populated that it embraced over two hundred cities with populations of fifteen thousand or more (see note, Mt. 4:12-13). Teeming crowds streamed to Jesus from all over the district (William Barclay. *The Gospel of Mathew*, Vol. 1. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1956, p.66).
 - b. Crowds came from Judea and Jerusalem. This was a hundred-mile journey.
 - c. Crowds came from Idumea which lay in the deep south, bordering Palestine and Arabia. Idumea was the Greek and Roman name for Edom or the land of Esau (Gen. 25:30; 36: 1, 8). The significant point is that these people travelled a great distance to reach Jesus.
 - d. Crowds came from beyond Jordan which refers to the populations who lived on the east side of the Jordan River.
 - e. Crowds came from the north, from the foreign land of Phoenicia and from the nation's two major cities, Tyre and Sidon.
2. The reason the crowds flocked to Jesus is given (v. 8). The people heard the testimony of those who had seen and heard Jesus themselves or else had been told by others about Jesus. The testimony that the Messiah had come — the prophet who could meet the needs of mankind — spread like wild-fire. And when the people heard, many arose, packed their bags and "came to Him" (v. 8).

Thought 1. The importance of witnessing and talking about the marvellous work of God's grace is strongly seen in Jesus' ministry. How many more would be flocking to Jesus and following Him if we were more faithful in sharing the glorious salvation in Him.

Mark 5:18-19 *As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."*

Mat 28:19-20 *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Eph 5:19 *Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.*

1 Pet 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

1 John 1:3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

Second, crowds crushed Him, even to the point of crushing Him and threatening His life. They pushed forward “to touch Him,” hoping that some *power* from Him might flow through their body and meet their need (v. 10). Jesus had to order a small boat to sit just a short distance off shore to rescue Him in case the crushing crowd became too much for Him to handle.

Thought 1. How desperately men need the same kind of fervour to seek after Jesus today. Men desperately need to touch Jesus. Men need the *power, the saving strength of Jesus*.

Mat 7:7 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Deu 04:29 But if from there [from sin] you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all our heart and with all our soul.

Psa 105:04 Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

Isa 55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Jer 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

III. Mark 03:11–12 The Impact on Evil Spirits

The impact of Jesus upon evil spirits was dramatic. His presence struck a terrible fear within them. Yet His power over evil spirits was both comforting and assuring to the believer (see note, Lk. 8:26-39).

1. The evil spirits were subject to Jesus. They “fell down before Him.” They knew Him, for He had been the greater power in the spiritual world or dimension of being. They could do nothing beyond His control. “Whenever they saw Him, [they] fell down before Him” (v. 11).
2. The evil spirits acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God (see note, Mk. 1:23-24). They acknowledged His Messiahship. The crowd had “pushed forward” to touch Jesus, hoping and praying for help; but the evil spirits “fell down before Him,” being stricken to acknowledge His deity. But note: they did not fall down out of devotion — not because they were seeking Him — but they fell down because they...

- acknowledged Him to be who He claimed to be.
- feared Him, lest He cast them out, sending them to their destined hell before the end time.

Thought 1. Every *evil spirit*, every evil man needs to fall down before Christ — fearing, standing in awe, and confessing lest he be destined for hell.

Mat 10:32-33 “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.”

Mark 8:38 “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

Luke 12:8 “I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God.”

Rom 10:9-10 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

1 John 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

Prov 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

3. Jesus rebuked the confession of the evil spirits (see note, Mk. 1: 25-26).

Thought 1. The confession Christ wants is the confession of a broken and contrite heart, a changed and repentant life.

Psa 34:18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psa 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Isa 57:15 For this is what the high and lofty One says — he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”

Isa 66:2 “Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?” declares the LORD. “This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.” ■

JESUS' IMPACT UPON THE TWELVE DISCIPLES: CALLING CHOICE MEN MARK 03: 13–19

Introduction

Jesus calls choice men — men with hearts that are ripe to be melted and moulded. He calls and appoints men, and He changes them. This is what this passage is all about: Jesus' impact upon choice men.

- I. Men called by Jesus (v.13).
- II. Men appointed by Jesus (vv. 14-15).
- III. Men changed by Jesus (vv. 16-19).

I. *Mark 03:13 Call of Ministers*

The disciples were *men called by Jesus*. Note three facts about what happened.

1. Jesus called, picked out and chose some choice men. Many followed Him, but there were a few who showed more interest and commitment. He noticed the ones...
 - who listened with more attention.
 - who were more awake and alert.
 - who responded with a stirred heart.
 - who showed more attachment to Him after the crowds had gone.
 - who wanted to serve God with meaning and purpose.

Jesus did not look at the stature and physics of the people, not at their appearance and looks, not even at their ability and education. Jesus looked at the hearts of the people. When He saw a person listening, stirred, attached and wanting to serve, He called that person.

2. Jesus “called...those he wanted.” His will was *the active power*. They did not choose Him, but He chose them. He did not call those whom the world thought more fit and educated. He called those whose hearts were right and responsive. He knew the heart, and His call was based on the principle of *heart response* (see Jn. 15:16).
3. The disciples “came to him.” The Greek means “they went away to him.” There is the idea that they left, forsook, went away from their former work to undertake the new work assigned by Jesus.

Mark 10:28 Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!”

Luke 5:11, 27-28 *So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him... After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.*

Luke 9:23-24 *Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it."*

Luke 14: 33 *"In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."*

Luke 18:29-30 *"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."*

II. Mark 03:14-15 Ministers, Appointed by Jesus

The disciples were men appointed by Jesus for four specific purposes (see *Appointed*, Mk. 3:14).

1. The disciples were appointed *to be with Jesus*. This was the first lesson Jesus wanted to teach men: that God wants man's personal fellowship and devotion before all else. God willed men to "know Him, believe Him and understand Him" above all else (Isa. 43:10). The disciples were to live in Jesus' presence, ever learning of Him and drawing their spiritual nourishment and strength from Him.

Isa 43:10 *"You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me."*

1 Cor 1:9 *God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.*

Phil 3:8, 10 *What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ...I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.*

Rev 3:20 *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.*

2. The disciples were appointed to be *sent out*. They were to be His ambassadors. His representatives who moved out into the world. They were appointed for that very purpose, to represent Him among the people of the world (see *Apostle*, Mt. 10:2).

2 Cor 5:20 *We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

Acts 26:16 *'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you.'*

3. The disciples were appointed to *preach*. They were to be the heralds, the messengers of Jesus Christ. He had a message for the world, and they were to proclaim His message to the world (see *Appointed*, and *Preach*, Mk. 3:14; *Gospel*, Rom. 1:1-7).

Mat 10:7 *"As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'"*

Mat 10:27 *"What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs."*

Mark 16:15 *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

Luke 9:2 *And he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*

Luke 9:60 *Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."*

Acts 04:20 *"For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."*

Acts 5:20 *"Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life."*

1 Cor 9:16 *Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!*

Jer 20:9 *But if I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.*

Amos 3:8 *The lion has roared — who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken — who can but prophesy?*

4. The disciples were appointed to *receive authority and power* — the authority and power to minister and to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons (see *Sickness, Demons*, Mk. 3:15; *Call, Power and Authority*, and *Unclean Spirits*, Mt. 10:1).

Luke 10:19-20 *"I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Acts 4:33 *With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.*

Eph 1:19 *And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength.*

Eph 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

2 Tim 1:6-8 *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.*

MATHEW 10: 02 APOSTLE (APOSTOLOS)

To send out. An apostle is a representative, an ambassador, a person who is sent out into one country to represent another country. Three things are true of the apostle.

=> He belongs to the One who has sent him out.

=> He is commissioned to be sent out.

=> He possesses all the authority and power of the One who sends him out.

The word *apostle* has both a narrow and a broad usage in the New Testament.

1. The narrow sense. It refers to the twelve apostles and to Paul as an apostle (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1). In this narrow sense, there were at least two basic qualifications.
 - a. The apostle was a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (see Mt. 10:1- 2; Mk. 3:13-14; Lk. 6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; 13:2; 22:10, 14-15; Rom. 1:1). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.
 - b. The apostle was a man who had been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1).
2. The broad sense. The word "apostle" refers to other men who preached the Gospel. It is used of two missionaries: Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14, 17) and Silas (1 Th. 2:6), and two messengers, Titus (2 Cor. 8:23) and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25). There is also a possibility that James, the Lord's brother (Gal. 1:19), and Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7) are referred to as apostles.

In the narrow sense, the gift of an apostle was bound to die out because of the unique qualifications to receive the gift. But historically, in the broad sense, there is perhaps a sense in which the qualifications and gift itself are still given and

used by the Lord. The Lord's servants of all generations must *see* the Lord and know Him intimately. Similarly, we must personally *see and experience* the power of the resurrection. Certainly there are some in every generation who have *so seen* the Lord Jesus and who *so know* and *so experience* the power of the Lord's resurrection. Perhaps the Lord Jesus endues some with the very special gift of an apostle to be used in a very special way throughout His most precious domain – the church. □

MARK 03:14 APPOINTED; ORDAINED (EPOIESE)

To be made or appointed. The word is taken from the Greek word *poieo* which means to do, to make, to appoint with credentials. The word is often used to refer to a person's being appointed to some high position or office. The picture is that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the future King of the universe, taking twelve men and appointing them to be His. He appoints (ordains) them to the *office* of being His ministers and representatives on earth. □

MARK 03:14 PREACH (KERUSSO)

To be a herald; to proclaim; to publish; to preach. The word carries with it the idea of intense feeling, gravity and authority – so much so that it *must* be listened to and heeded. The person who preaches is the herald of Jesus Christ; that is, his message is the message of Christ, not of someone else. The herald does not share his own opinions and views; He *proclaims* the truth of Jesus Christ (see *Apostle*, Mt. 10:2). □

ROMANS 01:01–07 GOSPEL; CHRISTIANITY

In these verses Paul gives the raw outline of the gospel he preached (vv. 1-4). It is a penetrating look at primitive Christianity. Note the gospel's close agreement with the Apostle's Creed.

1. Paul's view of the Old Testament.
 - a. It comes from God.
 - b. It is given "through His prophets."
 - c. It is "holy" Scripture.
2. Paul's view of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. He is God's Son: "regarding His Son."
 - b. He is the promised Saviour: "Christ," the Messiah.
 - c. He is Lord: "our Lord."

- d. He is man: "as to his human nature was a descendant of David"
 - e. He is declared to be the very Son of God: "declared with power to be the Son of God."
 - f. He is divine or holy: "through the Spirit of holiness."
 - g. He is risen from the dead: "by his resurrection from the dead."
3. Paul's view of the gospel.
- a. It is of God: "the Gospel of God" (see Rom. 1:1, 17; 3:21).
 - b. It was prophesied: "he promised...."
 - c. It agrees with the Old Testament: "promised before...in the Holy Scriptures."
 - d. It concerns God's very own Son: "regarding His Son."
 - e. It concerns the divine Saviour, Jesus Christ, our Lord, "who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead."
 - f. It concerns the human Saviour: "A descendant of David."
 - g. It concerns the risen Saviour: "his resurrection from the dead." □

MARK 03:15 SICKNESSES; DEMONS

Note two significant facts:

1. The word for power is not *dunamis*, the supernatural power of God. It is *exousia*, a delegated power or authority. The servant of God is not given the power of God to use as the servant wills, but the servant is given the authority to specifically minister by casting out demons. The servant prays and speaks the word, and then God does the actual casting out of the demon.
2. The emphasis of this delegated authority is casting out demons. The servant of Christ is given authority to cast out the evil spirits that rule men's lives. Note that the spiritual world or dimension of being is here acknowledged.

1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. □

III. Mark 03:16–19 Men Transformed by Jesus

The disciples were *men changed by Jesus*. But it is critical to keep in mind that each man had to be *willing* to be changed. One was not willing, Judas Iscariot. Jesus called them all, but only the ones willing to be changed were changed. (See *Simon Peter*, Mk. 3:16; *James and John*, Mk. 3:17; *Andrew*, Mk. 3:18; *Bartholomew*, Mk. 3:18; *Mathew*, Mk. 3:18;

Thomas, Mk. 3:18; James, the son of Alphaeus, Mk. 3:18; Thaddeus, Mk. 3:18; Simon the Zealot, Mk. 3:18; and Judas Iscariot, Mk. 3:19.)

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Rom 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

John 15:16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

MARK 03:16

SIMON, PETER (GREEK, PETROS), CEPHAS (ARAMAIC, KEPHA)

Peter was a rough-hewn fisherman. He looked, acted and spoke like any professional fisherman at the dock of a large lake or sea. Anyone who has been around a fisherman's dock or boat can picture Peter.

1. Peter had many commendable strengths.
 - a. Peter was self-sacrificing, giving up all — even his home and business — to follow Jesus (see notes, Mk. 1:16-18; Mt. 8:14).
 - b. Peter was spiritual minded. He was the first to really grasp who Jesus was (Mt. 16:16-19).
 - c. Peter was childlike and humble, often responding and leaping out to Jesus as a child does to his father (Mt. 14:26-29; Mk. 11:21; Jn. 13:6-11).
 - d. Peter was trusting, sometimes casting his whole being upon Jesus (Mt. 14:26-29).
 - e. Peter was tenderhearted and loving, caring deeply for his Lord (Mt. 26:75; Jn. 21:15-17).
 - f. Peter was courageous, the only disciple who defended Jesus against arrest. He was also one of the two disciples who followed Jesus through His trials and crucifixion, although he followed *at a distance* (Mt. 26:51; 26:58).
 - g. Peter would have been judged a hard-working, industrious man by any society.
2. Peter had some glaring weaknesses.
 - a. Peter was prideful and presumptuous, a man who thought he knew best and who sometimes lorded it over others. He was always depending upon human wisdom and strength, the arm of the flesh.

=> Peter thought he knew what was best for Jesus, insisting that Jesus did not have to die (Mt. 16:22-23).

=> Peter tried to prevent Jesus' arrest by drawing his sword and wounding one of the arresting party (Mt. 26:51; Mk. 14:47; Lk. 22:50).

=> Peter rebuked Jesus, overstepping the limits of his rights. When the people crowded Jesus, Jesus simply asked who had touched Him. Peter rebuked Jesus for asking such a question when there were so many people pressing in upon them (Lk. 8:45).

=> Peter, in a self-abasing pride, refused to let Jesus wash his feet (Jn. 13:6-11).

b. Peter was slow to learn and to understand truth (Mt. 15:15-16).

c. Peter was self-seeking (Mt. 19:27).

d. Peter was disbelieving (Mt. 14:30).

e. Peter was overbearing, even to the point of instructing Jesus (Mt. 16:22-23).

f. Peter had a weak, cowardly trait, being the only disciple to vocally deny Jesus (Mt. 26:69-74).

3. A chart showing some of the strengths and weaknesses of Peter can be pictured as follows:

=> Self-sacrificing (Mt. 1:16-18; Mk. 8:14) yet self-seeking (Mt. 19:27)

=> Spiritual minded (Mt. 16:16-19) yet slow to learn spiritual truth (Mt. 15:15-16)

=> Childlike and humble (Mk. 11:21; Jn. 13:6-11) yet presumptuous and prideful (Mt. 16:22-23; 26:51; Lk. 8:45)

=> Trusting (Mt. 14:26-29) yet disbelieving (Mt. 14:30)

=> Tenderhearted and loving (Mt. 26:75; Jn. 21:15-17) yet overbearing (Mt. 16:22-23; 26:51)

=> Courageous (Mt. 26:51; 26:58) yet cowardly (Mt. 26:69-74)

Peter was changed dramatically after Jesus' resurrection and after Pentecost. The presence of the living Lord in his life empowered him. Peter was able to take charge of the frightened band of disciples and lead them to fearlessly proclaim the glorious news of the risen Saviour. (See note, Mt. 8:14.) □

MARK 03:17 JAMES AND JOHN

These two men were brothers. They were the sons of Zebedee, a prosperous fisherman who was a man of high social position. Apparently he was well acquainted with the High Priest and his household, probably providing fish for the palace (see Jn. 18:15-18). Their mother was Salome, who is thought by many to be the sister of Mary,

the mother of Jesus. James and John were men of *stormy tempers*, so much so that Jesus called them the *sons of thunder*. Their tempers are seen when they ask Jesus to destroy a Samaritan village with fire for rejecting Him (Lk. 9:54).

The two brothers were also gripped by *worldly ambition*. They wanted the highest offices in the coming kingdom of Jesus (Mt. 20:20-21). However, Jesus dramatically changed the two men. Jesus changed their stormy temper into a burning zeal and ambition for God. They became two of the greatest witnesses for God ever known. James became the first of the twelve to be martyred; and John was the longest living disciple, becoming one of the greatest literary giants of all time (*The Gospel of John, The Three Epistles of John, and The Revelation*). (See notes, Mk. 1:20; 10:35-45; James, Lk. 5:10. See *Introduction, The Gospel of John and Revelation.*)

MARK 03:18 ANDREW

Andrew was apparently the first disciple of Our Lord. He had been a disciple of John the Baptist, longing for the Messianic hope. However, when John pointed out that Jesus was the Messiah, Andrew requested an interview with Jesus. From that point on, he was convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah, and Jesus struck a very special friendship with him (Mk. 13:3; Jn. 1:35-37). Jesus met his craving for the Messianic hope and increased his gifts of love and caring (see Jn. 1:41; 6:8-9; 12:21-22). Andrew was always helping people (Jn. 6:8-9; 12:21-22).

Tradition says Andrew preached in Jerusalem and was crucified for preaching against idolatry. He was hung on a cross in the shape of an **X**. □

MARK 03:18 PHILIP

Philip did not seek Jesus, but Jesus sought Philip (Jn. 1:43f). This indicates that Philip was slow in responding and believing, and he almost missed the opportunity to become an apostle of Jesus. In fact, being slow to respond and fearing to act seem to be the major weaknesses of Philip. He actually did miss the opportunity to demonstrate great faith when Jesus tested his faith in feeding the multitude. He was also slow in responding when some Greeks wanted to interview Jesus (Jn. 12:21-22). Again, he was slow in understanding who Jesus was (Jn. 14:8f). His faith and willingness to act were in constant need of being stirred and strengthened. Jesus changed him and made him a man of strong faith. This is seen in that he stood fast and fearless even in the face of martyrdom. Tradition tells us that he died as a martyr at Hierapolis. □

MARK 03:18 BARTHOLOMEW; NATHANAEL

Little is known about this disciple other than what is given by John. John alone mentions Nathanael. However, the other three gospels mention a disciple that John does not, Bartholomew. These two names probably refer to the same person. It is thought that Nathanael was a man's first name and Bartholomew was a man's second name. (Jn. 1:46-49). □

MARK 03:18 MATTHEW; LEVI

Matthew was a tax collector, an outcast of society, a traitor to the Jewish people. He felt the alienation and rejection ever so deeply. Yet Jesus took Matthew, changed His life, and met every need of his heart. (see *Mathew the Tax Collector*, Mt. 9:9-13; *Mathew*, Mk. 2:14. See Introduction, The Gospel of *Matthew*.) □

MATHEW 09:09–13 MATHEW THE TAX COLLECTOR

Jesus “saw a man,” a sinner who needed a change. The people saw not a man, but Mathew, a tax collector for the Romans. They hated him and all other tax collectors. There are three reasons why tax collectors were so bitterly hated.

1. They served the Roman conquerors. Most tax collectors were Jews, but in the people's eyes they had denied their Jewish heritage and betrayed their country. They were thus ostracized, completely cut off from Jewish society and excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges.
2. They were cheats, dishonest and unjust men. Most tax collectors were extremely wealthy. The Roman government compensated tax collectors by allowing them to collect more than the percentage required as taxes. Tax collectors greedily abused their right, adding whatever percent they wished and felt could be collected (Note, Rom. 13:6). They took bribes from the wealthy who wished to avoid taxes, fleeced the average citizen, and swindled the government whenever they could.
3. They were assuming rights that belonged only to God. In the eyes of the Jews, God and the ruling high priest were considered to be the head of Jewish government. Therefore, taxes were to be paid only to God and His government. To pay taxes to earthly rulers was an abuse and a denial of God's rights. Therefore, tax collectors were excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges. They were accursed, anathema. □

MARK 03:18 THOMAS, DIDYMUS (MEANING THE *TWIN*)

Thomas was a man of courage and loyalty. This is seen in his suggestion that the disciples follow Jesus even if it meant death (Jn. 1 1:8, 16). But he was also a skeptic, a pessimist, a doubter. He was slow to understand Jesus' Messiahship (Jn. 14:5-6), and he rejected the testimony of others that Jesus had actually risen from the dead. (See notes, Jn. 20:24-29.) However, the resurrection of Jesus changed Thomas — changed him completely. He has given to the world one of the strongest testimonies possible (Jn. 20:28).

Tradition says that Thomas went to Parthia (India), carrying the gospel to that great continent. He is said to have died a martyr's death. □

MARK 03:18 JAMES, THE SON OF ALPHEAUS

Little is known about this James.

=> His father was Alphaeus or Clopos (Jn. 19:25).

=> His mother was one of the women who stood by the cross and visited the tomb of Jesus (Jn. 19:25).

=> He had a brother, Joses, who was also a follower of Jesus (Mk. 15:40; 16:1; Jn. 19:25).

It is interesting to note that Mathew's father was also named Alphaeus. Thus, it is possible that James and Matthew were brothers. Tradition says that James was a tax collector just like Mathew. If true, this would give weight to their being brothers.

James was willing to be changed by Jesus, to become a true disciple of the Lord's. He did not forsake the disciples after the crucifixion but stayed right with them.

Therefore, he was present when Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection and began transforming the disciples into dynamic witnesses for Him. □

MARK 03:18 THADDAEUS, JUDAS, SON OF JAMES

Little is known about Thaddaeus. His name (Thaddaeus) means *breast* or *one that praises* or *man of heart*. The fact that Mathew and Mark call him by the name Thaddaeus, the man of heart, reveals that he was a man with a big heart, one who gave of himself to help and minister to others. The presence of the living Lord in his heart and life could only enlarge such a heart. □

MARK 03:18 SIMON THE ZEALOT

Simon was a member of the fanatical Jewish party known as the Zealots. The party held that God alone was to be the Ruler and Lord of the Jewish nation. They hated and bitterly opposed all foreign (Roman) domination. They preached and led revolutionary uprisings against the government when they could be formed.

The power of Jesus to change a man's heart is seen in Simon the Zealot. Simon's fanatical devotion turned him into a Zealot for Jesus. Note that he never changed the description of his fanatical nature. Even after his conversion and call, he still wanted his zeal to be known. He still wanted to be known as Simon the Zealot, one who was totally devoted to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah. □

MARK 03:19 JUDAS ISCARIOT

Very simply, Judas was unwilling to have his heart and life changed by Jesus (see notes, Mt. 26:14-16; 26:20-25; 27:3-5). □